

20

CHRIS MCCLARREN:

RECEIVED

21 MS. MCCLARREN: Let me quickly thank you for
22 JAN 20 2000 this chance to give you my response to your proposal. My
23 name is Chris McClarren and I've lived in this city all
24 my 35 years. I would like to preface my comments by
25 saying that I truly do not mean anything I'm about to say
1 to sound hostile. I want you to seriously listen to what
2 I have to say, but my feelings about this are strong.

1...

3 Your proposed action, if carried out, would be one of the
4 greatest mistakes this country could ever make and would
5 unnecessarily endanger the lives of millions of people
6 including generations of folks to come.

7 Please hear me out. Now, let me be clear. I
8 oppose this action plan completely. I opposed all
9 transport of this high-level radioactive waste, the
10 irradiated fuel rods, by air, water, highway or railway.
11 I oppose its concentration at Yucca Mountain, a known
2 earthquake-active site. High-level radioactive waste is
13 the most deadly toxin known to humans and this beautiful
14 planet. We made a grave mistake producing it. It's
15 humanity's most lethal legacy.

3...

16 There should be an immediate halt to its
17 production because its production is behind why we are
18 here today. Some scientists feel there are safe ways to
19 store and dispose of this waste. Most actually agree
20 that there is no truly safe way to do this. Since there
21 is disagreement in the scientific communities, we should
22 wait until it's absolutely clear how to deal with it
23 before transporting it and burying it deep in tunnels in

4 24 Yucca Mountain.
25 My own proposal would be to not only halt
1 production of the waste, but to keep this stuff
2 permanently where it is on site, above ground, monitored
...3 3 and retrievably stored. At least this waste should be
4 left where it is until it is safer to deal with and until
5 we know more about possibly neutralizing the radioactive
6 poisons. At the very least, you should wait to ship it
7 until the facility at Yucca Mountain is ready. Having
8 these fuel rods sitting around in a parking lot is not a
9 good idea.

10 Of course the gravest danger is and will be
11 transportation. First of all, transportation is not
12 needed and would be a waste of taxpayers' money. The
13 waste can be stored at or near existing nuclear sites.
5... 14 Utility companies are just trying to get the taxpayer to
15 shoulder the cost, the responsibility and liability for
16 long-term storage.

17 MR. BROWN: If you could -- I'm sorry. Just
18 slow down a little for the court reporter.

19 MS. MCCLARREN: Are you doing okay? Sorry,
20 but I'm just trying to get it down in five minutes.

21 MR. BROWN: Right.

5 cont 22 MS. MCCLARREN: We taxpayers would be paying
23 for our death warrants if we pay for the transportation
24 to Yucca. To quote an editorial in the Las Vegas Review
25 Journal, "As these poisons are dragged across cities,
1 every mile toxins go adds another dangerous mile to the

6 2 potential for a disaster." And as Rick Rappaport, a
3 Seattle neurosurgeon and member of the Puget Sound
4 Physicians for Social Responsibility said, "The
5 likelihood of cancers among people along the shipping
6 route in the event of an accident is 100 percent." With
7 large numbers of shipments, accidents are guaranteed to
8 happen.

9 Take one quick look at the track record of
10 the shipping industry, the trucking and railroad
11 industries to be used, and you will know immediately that
12 it will prove fatal to transport these wastes. I will
13 not go into a litany of these accidents that have
14 occurred with these industries, but I will mention one in
15 particular to make my point. Southern Pacific Railroad
16 dumped 20,000 gallons of a highly toxic pesticide into
17 the Sacramento River in '91 which killed over 100,000
18 fish along a 45-mile stretch of water leading to Lake
19 Shasta, a major source of drinking water supply for
20 millions of Californians. I want to read you a quote
21 from a man in the Sacramento Bee because it highlights
22 the dangers of transporting these wastes, and this is a
23 quote, "Instead of a derailed train dumping toxic weed
24 killer into the Sacramento River and the subsequent
25 catastrophic effects, picture the wreck, for whatever the
1 cause, of a truck and trailer hauling a load of nuclear
2 waste through any of our towns and cities. Nature may
3 dissipate the weed killer in 40 days, but the number of
4 lifetimes it would take for the radioactivity to wear off
5 can only be wildly imagined."

6 To paraphrase various information sources
7 7 I've researched, if a serious accident were to occur and
8 release radioactivity, people on land would be
9 contaminated resulting in severe, long-term health
10 effects and environmental problems. Avoiding the release
11 of radioactivity depends on the safety of shipping
12 containers and no safe shipping container exists today.

8 13 If an accident occurred, local emergency response people
14 would mostly likely arrive with no training or equipment
15 to handle radioactive waste accidents. Few hospitals are
16 prepared to treat victims of radiation exposure. Most
17 local governments and states don't have funding for such
18 training or equipment.

19 Imagine lots of new spills around the country
20 in highly populated areas like St. Louis, millions of
21 increasing cancer victims, truckloads of this waste
22 possibly dumped we know not where. Hazardous waste has
23 been known on occasion to just disappear when corrupt
24 entities are involved. Continue to imagine trains
25 derailed as they cross old, worn-out rail lines,
1 terrorists having a field day as thousands of these fuel
2 rods are transported. Imagine sabotage, fire and
3 collisions, natural catastrophes. It's a nightmare
4 scenario.

9 5 If you do decide to transport this stuff, I
6 beg of you to have acceptable emergency response plans
7 developed and implemented beforehand. As Mike Nelson of
8 the Greater St. Louis Lead Poisoning Prevention Council

9 says, "We can no longer tolerate the attitude that
10 residents of St. Louis City or any community should be
11 considered the collateral damage of any plans created by
12 individuals who do have public health and safety as a
13 priority." I ask you then -- I ask you then -- what are
14 your priorities? Are they us, the general public, or are
15 they the many who would stand to profit from this
16 clean-up?

17 This is a time in humanity's history when we
18 can no longer afford to make decisions according to
10 19 profit or those who profit. | I feel this action proposal
20 was made with the nuclear power interests in mind, not
21 the welfare of the people of this country, as so little
22 attention given to the no-action alternative shows. This
23 decision should be made according to what is best for us
24 all. We must wake up. We are going through a sixth mass
25 extinction due to the many mistakes made by us humans and
1 our treatment of the Earth. We cannot afford any more
2 big mistakes, so what you do about this waste will be
11 3 critical now and in the future.

4 More community residents and public
5 involvement is needed in this decision making. Public
6 education of all should be required about the source,
7 nature and necessary containment of radioactive materials
8 in order to preserve continuity of life on the planet so
9 an informed citizenry can join together locally,
10 regionally, nationally and globally to expose this lethal
11 reality of our nuclear legacy and better participate in
12 these processes of what to do about it. | Until then,

13 leave the waste where it is, as I have suggested. Make
14 these sites monuments to a new legacy of humans turning
15 the tide on their own follies and beginning to live not
16 as gods, but as one humble creature amongst many,
17 accountable to the laws of nature.

18 We could surround the sites with murals and
19 educational materials. They could be monuments of hope
20 that humans can learn from their mistakes and live simply
21 and well with the Earth and each other.